

RECONCILIATION III

PRACTICAL POINTS

“I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” (Matt. 18: 19 - 20)

Significance of two or three from different Christian churches and denominations:

Reconciliation already expressed in the prayer

IN WHOSE NAME?

Important to distinguish

1. Governmental and Official Confessions

By people in authority with public responsibility

Nation/society: national, regional, city levels

Church: national, diocesan, parish

2. Personal Initiatives with others - not official, but can have representative character

- Importance of Identity and Identification
- When we fully identify with our church/nation, we can pray as representing our church/nation before the Lord
- Identification is permanent lifestyle, not an intercessory technique

- Do not claim to be more than you are, or less!
- Avoid all exaggerated language
- HUMILITY AND TRUTH
- Sins that caused division were arrogant and spread lies

- 3. My Personal Prayer and Intercession
- (or small group)

- Often 3 prepares the way for 2 and 2 prepares the way for 1

LOCAL RECONCILIATION

- As leaders be clear about
 1. what anyone can do
 - to confess wrong attitudes
 - to proclaim the victory of the Lord
over sin
 2. what needs preparation
 - Research into local history

- Start Local (City, Region)
 - - learn out about local history
 - other Christians, Jews, minorities
 - - form relationships and listen
- BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
- Do not recruit people for reconciliation initiatives. Teach the gospel of reconciliation, and see who the Holy Spirit touches.

Locating places of grave evil and injustice

- Massacre sites
- Concentration camps
- Places of Torture
- Forcibly evicted/transferred populations
- Places where much blood has been shed
- Desecrated synagogues

BIGGER INITIATIVES

- In general begin small - friend, come up higher!
Going to the root of the history of sin, of conflicts
- Requires historical research
- Requires a willingness to be radically challenged, to rewrite our histories
- Only mature people ready to face the consequences should take part in such initiatives

NATIONAL TENSIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE

- Repentance for wrong attitudes can begin now
- But healing of the wounds of history requires knowledge, wisdom, sensitivity
- Need to go back behind 1920 and 1945
- These tensions and conflicts have roots that go back centuries
- Relatedness of national and religious

Enforced Suppression of Protestantism by the Habsburgs

- What are the effects still present today

Legacy of transplanted populations

Effects of the removal of the Jews

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD

- Ephesians 6: 10 - 20
- “Put on the whole armour of God” (v. 11)
- ”take up the whole armour of God” (v. 13)
- Against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (v. 12)

- Girded with truth
- Put on the breastplate of righteousness
- The gospel of peace (shalom)
- The shield of faith
- The helmet of salvation
- The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God
- praying always ... in the Spirit

PUBLICITY?

Governmental and official confessions of past sin should receive maximum publicity

Significant Group Visits to Atrocity Sites could be reported to make people aware

Do not make spiritual claims for what was achieved

Intercessory confession and repentance is a transaction between those engaged and the Lord. It is generally not appropriate to broadcast this to the world.